

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK



Board of Livestock Meeting Minutes

March 17 & 18, 2008

Monday 1:00 p.m. - Tuesday 8:00 a.m.

Helena MT 59601

Monday, March 17, 2008

Draft

Board of Livestock Members Present:

Stan Boone, representing cattle producers
Jan French, Vice Chair, representing pork producers
George Hammond, representing cattle producers
Bill Hedstrom, Chairman, representing dairy and egg producers
Meg Smith, representing cattle producers
Becky Weed, representing sheep producers

Absent:

Linda Nielsen, representing cattle producers

Staff:

Marty Clark, assistant administrator, Brands Enforcement Division
George Edwards, administrative assistant, Livestock Loss Reduction Mitigation Board
Marty Falstad, market compliance, Brands Enforcement Division
Clyde Huseby, health investigator, Animal Health Division
Dr Bill Layton, administrator Diagnostic Laboratory
Christian Mackay, executive officer
Steve Merritt, public information officer
Dr. Jeanne Rankin, assistant state veterinarian, Animal Health Division
Sherry Rust, administrative assistant, recorder
Evaleen Starkel, administrative specialist, Alternative Livestock, Animal Health Division
Dan Turcotte, chief, Milk, and Egg Bureau

Guests:

Carole Boone
Jeremy Seidlitz, Montana Cattlemens Association
Marty Casey, Sidney Livestock Auction
Paul Ringling, producer
Les Graham, Montana Market Association, Montana Farm Bureau
John Steuber, APHIS Wildlife Services
Glen Hockett, Gallatin Wildlife Association
Dr. Tom Linfield
Errol Rice, MSGA
Steve Roth, MSGA
Kim Baker, MCA
Gene Curry, producer
Neal Anderson, FWP
Ariel Overstreet, Agri-News

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Call to Order and Board Communications:

Chairman Bill Hedstrom called the meeting to order at 1: p.m.

- Becky Weed - Lambing has just started. She recently attended shearing school. It was a good experience.
- George Hammond - There is good moisture in the immediate area and hay is in good supply. Trich and BVD may be in his area. Cattle prices are holding vs. chicken and pork.
- Jan French - Concern is the cost of feed and low prices, pork is at 34 cents a pound. Barley is \$10 or more.
- Meg Smith - Still have wolves, elk. Dry cow business is really good. Hay prices are sky high.
- Stan Boone - Good weather with heavy wet snow in February, gone now. Grass is starting to green up.
- Bill Hedstrom - Still have a foot of snow. Hay is out there but freight is high with average at \$230-250/ton plus freight. x to eight milk producers are expected to go out this year.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the January 14 and 15, 2008 meeting were accepted as presented.

Approval of Executive Officer Reports:

Jan French moved to approve the Executive Officer report. Stan Boone seconded.

The motion carried with Meg Smith voting no.

Approval of Chairman Interim Authorizations and Activities:

Chairman Bill Hedstrom said he had nothing to report; no authorizations or activities so no need for approval.

NEW BUSINESS

REQUEST TO MOVE MARKET LICENSE

Marty Casey, Sidney Livestock Market Center, informed the board he was recently told that the lease on the market complex housing his business will not be renewed. He stated his intent to continue the business and questioned the procedures required to move the market certificate to another location within the Sidney area. He mentioned two possible sites that are within two miles the current site. He said facility plans are in the works and environmental requirements are met.

Marty Falstad explained that there is nothing in the DOL statutes prohibiting a move but board approval is required prior to any move. Regarding any new site, statutory requirements would need to be met.

George Hammond moved to authorize relocation of the Casey certificate to a new location within the Sidney area pending provision of proper documentation on the new facility. Jan French seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

REQUEST FOR REVISION OF BILL OF SALE

Paul Ringling presented a suggested change from the Montana Cattlemens Association in the DOL bill of sale. The change includes statements for the seller to check pertaining to livestock bred and raised in the USA or that comply with the MT Natural Beef Program. This proposal is meant to provide incentive for those complying with the appropriate programs and is strictly voluntary. He requested inclusion of the changes when DOL next printing of bills of sale. Discussion followed regarding department liability and legality.

Meg Smith moved to table the request to the May board meeting to allow consultation possible regarding legal issues. Jan French seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

UPDATE ON 12 DAY RULE ISSUE

Dan Turcotte said he is holding enforcement until the issues discussed at the last meeting are resolved. The dealer is actually showing more aggression, working to move into more markets and displaying dual dates. He explained the history of the single exception to the rule and how the distributor is not complying with the agreement. Clyde Peterson suggested the department use the attorney general's office regarding the possible suit on interstate shipping. He explained the issue and suggested options. He will put together a notice for Dan to reply to the issues.

PRODUCER ORGANIZATION UPDATES

KIM BAKER, Montana Cattlemens Association, represents about one thousand members. MCA has placed the brands on their website with three free searches. They are promoting Montana beef with their foundation as "beef on every plate" and working with the food bank network.

LES GRAHAM spoke for the Montana Farm Bureau Federation expressing the board's stand with the bison issue. He also forwarded a request for more notification of actions and meetings to producers around the state.

STEVE ROTH, Montana Stockgrowers Association, also expressed the stockgrowers appreciation to the board.

JEREMY SEIDLITZ, MCA, expanded on the "beef on every plate" where producers donate cull cows and bulls to the food banks and raise funds locally for processing. This project works through the Food Bank Network.

RECESS: The meeting was recessed at 2:45 p.m.

RECONVENE: The meeting was reconvened at 3:00 p.m.

UPDATES & REPORTS

WILDLIFE SERVICES (PREDATOR CONTROL)

John Steuber, USDA APHIS Wildlife Services, provided an update on WS activities on behalf of the department.

- a 29 year WS employee died in a traffic accident on February 16.
- wolf activities typically increase this time of year.
 - Near Two Dot a single black wolf killed 5 sheep, injured 5 of which three had to be put down.
 - Instructions from MFWP are to capture and collar that wolf.
 - Wolf kills of calves have been reported near Boulder, Big Hole, and Salish Kootinai.
 - Delisting becomes effective March 28th.
 - Minimum estimates for wolf population in Montana is averaging 30% increase over the last 4 years.
 - From 316 in December 2006 to 422 December 2007.
 - Up to 50% of agency time in some areas is spent on wolves.
- provided a handout showing results of testing for tularemia and plague in wolves, coyotes, red fox, bears and lions.
- They are monitoring mangy wolves - some coming out of Yellowstone.
- The replacement helicopter arrived February 11 and is keeping busy. It will be used in other states as time permits with that state paying costs including maintenance.

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Open Microphone

The chair opened the floor to the public for comments.

Adjournment

Chairman Hedstrom adjourned the meeting at 3:35 p.m.

The Board called an Executive session.

Personal right to privacy exceeds the public right to know.

Tuesday, March 18, 2008

Board of Livestock Present:

Stan Boone, representing cattle producers

Jan French, Vice Chair, representing pork producers

George Hammond, representing cattle producers

Bill Hedstrom, Chairman, representing dairy and egg producers

Meg Smith, representing cattle producers

Becky Weed, representing sheep producers

Absent:

Linda Nielsen, representing cattle producers

Staff:

Marty Clark, assistant administrator, Brands Enforcement Division

George Edwards, administrative assistant, Livestock Loss Reduction Mitigation Board

Dr Bill Layton, administrator Diagnostic Laboratory

Christian Mackay, executive officer

Steve Merritt, public information officer

Monte Nick, Milk Control Bureau chief

Dr. Jeanne Rankin, assistant state veterinarian, Animal Health Division

Sherry Rust, administrative assistant, recorder

Evaleen Starkel, administrative specialist, Alternative Livestock, Animal Health Division

Rob Tierney, supervisor, Bison Management Program, Animal Health Division

Dan Turcotte, chief, Milk, and Egg Bureau

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Guests:

Gene Curry, producer

Ariel Overstreet, Agri-News

Carole Boone

Steve Roth, Montana Stockgrowers Association

Jeanne-Marie Souvigney

Ann Miller, Montana Pork Producers

Nicole Griffin, Montana Farm Bureau Federation

Les Graham, Montana Farm Bureau, MALAM

Jake Cummins, Montana Farm Bureau

Dr Tom Linfield

John Steuber, USDA Wildlife Services

Fred Finke

Neil Anderson, FWP

Pat Flowers, FWP

Pam Joehler, Legislative Fiscal Division

Chairman Bill Hedstrom called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Division Updates

BRANDS ENFORCEMENT

Christian Mackay provided the division update for administrator John Grainger who was absent due to a death in the family.

- Two district men are currently involved in a theft investigation in south central Montana.
- On the Western States Livestock Investigator meeting in Reno which John Grainger, Marty Clark, and he attended:
 - Arizona only has about 750,000 head of cattle left, one inspector and no horse inspections - seems to be the trend
 - new technology used by other states including
 - surveillance technology,(available to Montana if needed)
 - a PDA type unit which can hold all brands database, write inspections, send paperwork electronically to the main office etc (might be useful in the future)
- Locally, the market permit and the sheep movement permit work order has been completed with Montana Interactive and we are five to six months out on that. No cost to the department for this service.
- Reviewed personnel changes within the markets.

DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY

Dr. Layton reported:

- the new a histopathologist is from Colorado to be onboard March 31.
- reviewed the MVMA winter meeting referring the board to his monthly reports for details.
- still has not received the AAVLD report.
- online EIA submissions seem to be going okay.
- clin-path submissions are down.

MILK & EGG BUREAU

Dan Turcotte reported:

- on the recent conference in Reno where the big topic was the RBST rule.
 - FDA wants the label to read "comes from cows not treated with RBST".
 - milk production is up or near the same without RBST.
 - Montana milk is virtually RBST treatment free.
- He has been receiving inquiries regarding raw milk and requests to allow raw milk sales.
- Three or four more egg producers (Hutterite Colonies) are going to "free range".
 - Roy Hall is getting rating certified with USDA
 - producers will pay the cost of state inspection
 - rather than have a USDA inspector come over from Seattle.

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

Steve Merritt reviewed accomplishments and during his 5 month tenure with the department.

Projects include:

- Per Capita Fee outreach program through a variety of media
- Online per capita form
- Updating DOL website
- Updating brochures
- Animal health newsletter - to approximately 600 state veterinarians
- MDOL newsletter
- NAIS Community Outreach

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- National Association of State Department of Agriculture- associate member - need to expand DOL representation
- Weekly report to communicate activities and information to a wider group - sign up for newsletter

ANIMAL HEALTH

Dr. Zaluski reported:

- the herd plans - ready to start.
 - Dr. Linfield contracted with the department to work on the herd plan and risk mitigation.
 - Becky Frey, USDA is working with Dr. Ryan in conjunction to department efforts.
 - Also are exploring how FWP can help with wildlife in the herd plan areas.
- IBMP
 - may hear today whether RTR funding will happen (\$1.5 million).
 - The quarantine facility lease is settled and will start taking calves today or tomorrow.
- UM&R regarding brucellosis
 - Does the current UM&R reflect the disease situation in the U.S. today.
 - need is to identify required changes and be ready to make suggestions, review through USAHA-Veterinarian Board and Association of State Veterinarian.
 - They eventually will make recommendations to USDA.
- North Dakota Board of Animal Health meeting in Bismarck
 - Dr Rankin provided a copy of the brucellosis epidemiology investigation to the North Dakota Board of Animal Health
 - requested that Montana be treated differently since we never lost our status, we do not feed elk; have herd plans in place, etc.
 - ND board's concern was with elk migration out of Yellowstone Park.
 - voted to remove all testing on Montana cattle except for those in Carbon, Park, Madison, and Gallatin counties.
- Elk brucellosis surveillance update presented by Neal Anderson, FW&P
 - provided a summary of hunter killed samples
 - discussed options for future surveillance.
- Pat Flowers, FW&P Region Three supervisor
 - reviewed the scoping document for the new hunt environmental assessment
 - cited the need for greater flexibility in administering the bison hunt.
- reviewed the depredation program
 - benefits and limitations.
 - is a property or crop damage program by statute.

Recess:

The chairman called a recess at 10:30 p.m.

Reconvene:

The meeting reconvened at 10:45 p

OUT OF STATE TRAVEL REQUEST

Dr Zaluski board authorization for Dr. Rankin to travel to a NIAA meeting Indianapolis in April. Travel would be paid out of cooperative agreement. **Jan French moved to authorize the travel as requested. Stan Boone seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

Dr. Zaluski continued:

- the Basic Brucellosis Epidemiology course recently attended in Jackson, MO
- on the Western States Animal Health meeting in Reno, NV.

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- gave a brief summary of bison operations to date and provided an update on the GAO review.
- NAIS
 - Steve Merritt recently attended an outreach meeting in San Diego returning with fresh ideas to increase premises registration.
 - the work plan for the USDA NAIS cooperative agreement has been revised

CENTRALIZED SERVICES REPORT

BOARD OF MILK CONTROL

Monte Nick updated the board on issues discussed at the last board meeting

- most issues were withdrawn except freight
- The new topic is minimum price violation issue with Country Classic.

The board discussed issues and authorities, seeking input from Clyde Peterson.

George Hammond moved that the Board of Livestock delegate the Board of Milk Control make a determination on the minimal pricing issue. Board of Milk Control has authority over milk pricing by statute. Jan French seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

BOARD OF HORSE RACING

Christian Mackay reported

- on the conference call and meeting between him, Sam Murfitt, and the BOHR.
- there is approximately \$20,000 left in their budget.
- recommendations made:
 - lay off the full time secretary
 - close the office
 - Mr. Murfitt continue half time to complete this year's race meets and working on Fantasy Sports rules.

REQUEST FOR OUT OF STATE TRAVEL

Christian Mackay has been requested to accompany the Director of Department of Ag to the Tri-National Agricultural Accord in Sacramento, CA. He requested board authorization for Dr. Zaluski and himself to attend.

Becky Weed moved to approve the requested out of state travel. Jan French seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Livestock Loss Reduction and Mitigation Board

George Edwards said the first LLRMB meeting took place on February 11th with orientation of the board members and discussion regarding purpose and funding. He continues to work on rules for the board.

BUDGET REPORTS

George Harris was absent due to a death in his family. Christian Mackay

- provided budget workbooks from George Harris to the board.
- discussed the EPP sheet and options for the future.
- Cited the need recruit and retain new employees
 - nearly one half of the brands district men are due to retire in the next few years
- need to stay current in technology
- suggested new funding options. Per Capita fees are holding but there is a limit to what the department can charge producers.
 - possibility of merging lab functions (with DPHHS) eventually,
 - general funds for public health items (rabies, etc),
 - new fees in animal health

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Open Microphone

The chair opened the floor to the public for comments.

GLEN HOCKETT, Gallatin Wildlife Association provided documents and commented regarding the brucellosis, livestock, and wildlife management solutions as suggested by the GWA.

ANN MILLER, Pork Producers Council, provided information on the new requirements. Among them is the requirement that national ID must be in place for PQA+.

JEREMY SEIDLITZ, Montana Cattlemens Association stated the MCA opposition to mandatory National ID. Rather it should be market demand driven.

STEVE ROTH, Montana Stockgrowers Association, requested more board interaction with producers to let producers know what the department is doing. He suggested the board select some producers to work on the funding issues. He opined that to stop killing bison equals no removal of livestock from a confined ranch. It just is not practical or workable.

The next board meeting is scheduled for May 19 and 20, 2008.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

BILL HEDSTROM, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF LIVESTOCK